

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----104104 141723Z /41
O 141635Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1920

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 3463

NODIS CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, IS,US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH WEIZMAN: HIS VERSION OF MEETING WITH THE
PRESIDENT

1. I MET WITH MINDEF WEIZMAN AT 1100 HOURS THIS MORNING
(MARCH 14) AT MOD. PRESENT WERE WEIZMAN'S AIDE, COL. TEHILA
AND COL. WILLIAMS. OUR DISCUSSION COVERED SEVERAL SUBJECTS
INCLUDING WEIZMAN'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER; HIS
VIEWS ON THE UPCOMING BEGIN VISIT; IDF RETALIATORY ACTION
IN RESPONSE TO PAST WEEKEND'S TERRORIST ATTACK; AND AMOCO'S
PROBLEMS IN THE GULF OF SUEZ. THIS MESSAGE COVERS HIS TALK
WITH THE PRESIDENT. OTHER TOPICS ARE BEING REPORTED BY
SEPTELS.

2. WEIZMAN OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY OBSERVING THAT HE HOPED
HIS ABRUPT RETURN FROM THE U.S. HAD NOT ENDED HIS DIALOGUE
WITH THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. HE LOOKS FORWARD TO
FURTHER TALKS WITH SECRETARY BROWN AND EXPRESSED REGRET
THAT ADDITIONAL SCHEDULED CONVERSATIONS HAD NOT TAKEN
PLACE BECAUSE OF HIS SUDDEN DEPARTURE FOR HOME. HE
SAID THAT HE AND SECRETARY BROWN HAD BEEN ENGAGED IN SOME
"HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED HORSETRADING--IF BEGIN BEHAVES
WE GET 200 TANKS; IF HE DOES NOT BEHAVE, WE DON'T GET
ANY TANKS." HE CONSIDERS THAT HIS VISIT WITH THE
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SECRETARY WAS SUCCESSFUL BOTH ON A PERSONAL AND SUBSTANTIVE
BASIS, AND LOOKS FORWARD TO A CONTINUATION OF THE
RELATIONSHIP.

3. WEIZMAN DWELLED AT LENGTH (IN A SOMEWHAT INCOHERENT
AND UNORGANIZED FASHION) ON HIS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT.
CLEARLY HE WAS VERY AWED BY THIS ENCOUNTER. HE CONSIDERS

IT TO HAVE BEEN PERHAPS THE GREATEST MOMENT OF HIS LIFE. THE ONLY NEGATIVE NOTE HE MENTIONED CONCERNED AMBASSADOR DINITZ' BEING EXCLUDED FROM THE CABINET ROOM WHILE SEVERAL OTHER AMERICANS WERE PRESENT. HE WAS VERY SORRY "THE DOOR HAD BEEN SHUT IN DINITZ' FACE," BUT I DID NOT GAIN THE IMPRESSION WEIZMAN HAD LOST MUCH SLEEP OVER THE INCIDENT. IN PARTICULAR IT SEEMED TO HAVE POSED A PROBLEM FOR HIM BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF AN ISRAELI-NOTE-TAKER. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT HIS REPORT TO THE CABINET MAY NOT HAVE BEEN TOTALLY ACCURATE BECAUSE HE SAID, HE WAS CONCENTRATING MORE ON WHAT TO SAY TO THE PRESIDENT AND LESS ON REMEMBERING WHAT WAS SAID TO HIM.

4. WEIZMAN SAID HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT FOCUSED ON TWO SUBJECTS: 242 AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT. HE QUOTED THE PRESIDENT AS SAYING THAT HE WAS "SHOCKED AND DISMAYED AT (THE ISRAELI STANCE ON) 242". WEIZMAN HAD SO REPORTED THIS TO THE ISRAELI CABINET. HE SAID THE PRESIDENT HAD AGREED THAT WHATEVER SOLUTION MAY BE REACHED FOR THE WEST BANK THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF ISRAELI MILITARY IS UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED BY THE U.S. WEIZMAN WELCOMED THIS APPROACH BUT WONDERED HOW FEASIBLE IT WOULD BE IF A PLEBISCITE RESULTED IN LINKING THE WEST BANK WITH JORDAN. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES
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HE DOES NOT BELIEVE AN ISRAELI MILITARY PRESENCE WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

5. WEIZMAN WAS HEARTENED BY THE PRESIDENT'S BELIEF THAT A BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT IS STILL POSSIBLE. BUT THIS WAS PARTIALLY OFF-SET BY WHAT HE TOOK TO BE A PRESIDENTIAL WARNING. HE SAID THE PRESIDENT HAD VERY CAREFULLY STATED THAT "IN DIPLOMACY THINGS CAN BE POSTPONED. WEIZMAN QUOTED THE PRESIDENT AS STATING THAT IF IT PROVED TO BE NECESSARY TO POSTPONE FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS THEN HE, THE PRESIDENT, "WOULD HAVE TO EXPLAIN TO THE PEOPLE OF THE U.S., INCLUDING THE JEWS, WHY THE POSTPONEMENT WAS NECESSARY." WEIZMAN OBVIOUSLY LINKED THIS STATEMENT WITH BEGIN'S INTRANSIGENCE ON 242 AND WITH HIS INSISTENCE ON THE RETENTION OF SETTLEMENTS AND AIRFIELDS IN THE SINAI, EITHER OF WHICH HE OBSERVED COULD BRING ABOUT A RUPTURE IN NEGOTIATIONS. SHOULD THIS HAPPEN HE SAID THE IMPRESSION WAS NOT LOST ON HIM THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD LAY THE FAILURE SQUARELY IN FRONT OF THE ISRAELI DOOR.

6. DURING THE COURSE OF HIS RAMBLING MONOLOGUE WEIZMAN REFERRED TO VOICES IN ISRAEL AND IN THE U.S. WARNING

HIM THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS BENT ON ACHIEVING A SETTLEMENT AT THE EXPENSE OF ISRAEL AND THAT IT WILL EXERT WHATEVER PRESSURE NECESSARY ON ISRAEL TO BRING THIS ABOUT. HE REFERRED TO THE EXTREME SENSITIVITY OF SOME OF HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES TO SUCH AN APPROACH BY RECALLING THAT WHEN HE REPORTED THE PRESEIDENT AS HAVING SAID "I SHALL PURSUE PEACE AGGRESSIVELY," SOME MEMBERS OF THE CABINET PROMPTLY TRANSLATED "AGGRESSIVELY" AS "ARM TWISTING."

7. IN SUM, WEIZMAN VIEWS HIS WASHINGTON MEETING AS A SUCCESS AND HOPES THAT HE DID A LOYAL JOB OF PAVING THE WAY FOR BEGIN. HE WAS REMINDED, HE SAID, OF A STORY OF THE TIME WHEN MOSHE DAYAN WAS COMMANDER IN THE NORTH AND BAR-LEV WAS THE CHIEF OF STAFF. THIS
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TALE HAS IT THAT DAYAN TOLD BAR-LEV THE CHIEF OF STAFF MUST EVERY AFTERNOON RECTIFY THE THINGS DAYAN HAD MISMANAGED IN THE MORNING. GRINNING WEIZMAN SAID HE VIEWED HIS ROLE DURING HIS WASHINGTON VISIT AS THAT OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF.
VIETS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PEACE, MEETINGS, NEGOTIATIONS, CAT-C, CHEROKEE 03/14/78
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV03463
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840157-1909, N780003-0446
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780369/aaaacgfs.tel
Line Count: 142
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: de016ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3331941
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH WEIZMAN: HIS VERSION OF MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT
TAGS: PEPR, IS, US, XF, (WEIZMAN, EZER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/de016ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014